Amendments to the Claims: This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1 - 6. **(Canceled)**

7. (**Currently Amended**) ~~An agriculturally acceptable~~ A composition for ~~initiating~~ increasing an early ~~flowering~~ number or ~~budding~~ an early fruit number in a nonleguminous plant comprising ~~an effective amount of at least one~~ a lipo-chitooligosaccharide (LCO) ~~with at least one agriculturally acceptable carrier~~ in a concentration effective to increase the flower number or fruit number in the plant within four weeks following an application of the composition to the plant.

8. (**Currently Amended**) A method for ~~initiating~~ increasing an early ~~flowering, budding or~~ fruiting number in a nonleguminous plant comprising applying to ~~foliage of~~ the plant ~~an effective amount of at least one~~ a lipo-chitooligosaccharide (LCO) at a concentration of from about 1 ng to about 1000 ng per plant ~~with one or more agriculturally acceptable carrier, wherein flowering, budding or fruiting is initiated early in the nonleguminous plant~~.

9. - 13. (**Canceled**)

14. (**Canceled**)

15. (**Canceled**)

16. (**Canceled**)

17. (**Previously Presented**) The method of claim 8, wherein the nonleguminous plant is of the family *Brassicaceae, Solonaceae, Chenopodiaceae, Asteraceae, Malvaceae, Cucurbitaceae,* or *Poaceae*.

18. (**Currently Amended**) The method of claim 8, wherein the ~~one or more lipo-chitooligosaccharide~~LCO is applied at a concentration of from about ~~1~~ 10 ng per plant to about ~~1000~~ 100 ng per plant.

19. (**Currently Amended**) The method of claim ~~18~~8, wherein the nonleguminous plant is a tomato plant, a pepper plant, or ~~an ornamental~~a strawberry plant.

20. (**Currently Amended**) The method of claim 18, wherein the ~~one or more lipo-chitooligosaccharide~~LCO is applied at a concentration of from about ~~10~~ 50 ng per plant to about ~~300~~ 75 ng per plant.

21. (**Currently Amended**) A method for ~~increasing~~ increasing an early flower number ~~or associated yield~~ in a nonleguminous plant comprising applying to ~~foliage of~~ the plant ~~an effective amount of at least one~~a lipo-chitooligosaccharide (LCO) at a concentration of from about 1 ng to about 1000 ng per plant ~~with one or more agriculturally acceptable carrier, wherein flower number or associated yield is increased in the nonleguminous plant~~.

22. (**Previously Presented**) The method of claim 21, wherein the nonleguminous plant is of the family *Brassicaceae, Solonaceae, Chenopodiaceae, Asteraceae, Malvaceae, Cucurbitaceae,* or *Poaceae*.

23. (**Currently Amended**) The method of claim 21, wherein the ~~one or more lipo-chitooligosaccharide~~LCO is applied at a concentration of from about ~~1ng~~ 10 ng per plant to about ~~1000~~ 100 ng per plant.

24. (**Currently Amended**) The method of claim ~~23~~21, wherein the nonleguminous plant is a tomato plant~~, pepper plant, or ornamental plant~~.

25. (**Currently Amended**) The method of claim ~~23~~21, wherein the ~~one or more lipo-chitooligosaccharide~~LCO is applied at a concentration of from about ~~10~~ 50 ng per plant to about ~~300~~ 75 ng per plant.

26. (**Canceled**)

27. (**Canceled**)

28. (**Currently Amended**) A method for ~~initiating~~ increasing an early ~~flowering, budding or fruiting~~ number in a nonleguminous plant comprising applying to ~~foliage of~~ the plant ~~an effective amount of~~ the composition of claim 7.

29. (**Currently Amended**) A method for increasing an early flower number ~~or associated yield~~ in a nonleguminous plant comprising applying to ~~foliage of~~ the plant an effective amount of the composition of claim 7.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8, wherein the non-leguminous plant is a tomato plant.

31. (**Canceled**)

32. (**Canceled**)

33. (**New**) The composition of claim 7, wherein the nonleguminous plant is a tomato plant.

34. (**New**) The method of claim 8, wherein the step of applying an LCO comprises applying a first dose of LCO and a second dose of LCO, wherein the second dose is applied about two weeks after the first dose.

35. (**New**) The method of claim 21, wherein the step of applying an LCO comprises applying a first dose of LCO and a second dose of LCO, wherein the second dose is applied about two weeks after the first dose.

36. (**New**) The method of claim 8, comprising applying the LCO to the foliage of the plant.

37. (**New**) The method of claim 21, comprising applying the LCO to the foliage of the plant.

38. (**New**) The method of claim 8, wherein the fruit number of the plant is increased within four weeks following said application.

39. (**New**) The method of claim 21, wherein the flower number of the plant is increased within four weeks following said application.